

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1358

S E C R E T PRETORIA 3262

NODIS/CHEROKEE

FOR AF DICK MOOSE FROM LOW

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PINT, PDEV, RH
SUBJECT: RHODESIA/ MEETING WITH REVEREND TOM CURTIS

1. CURTIS CONTACTED ME AND WE MET BRIEFLY WEDNESDAY NOON, JUNE 7. HE IS ANXIOUS FOR FURTHER MEETINGS IN ORDER TO FAMILIARIZE HIMSELF WITH SOME OF THE ISSUES ON WHICH HE FEELS UNINFORMED. HE HAS MET MUZOREWA ONCE AND WILL MEET HIM AGAIN AT LENGTH JUNE 8, AND HE HAS TRAVELLED A FAIR AMOUNT IN EASTERN RHODESIA.

2. HIS FIRST CONCERN RELATED TO A SUBJECT ABOUT WHICH MUZOREWA HAD TELEGRAPHED HIM IN THE STATES AND HAD RAISED IMMEDIATELY ON HIS ARRIVAL HERE. IT CONCERNS A REQUEST HE APPARENTLY MADE TO THE SECRETARY FOR \$1 MILLION WHICH HE HAS NOW RAISED TO \$4M. CURTIS ASKED HOW TO HANDLE THIS. I TOLD HIM THAT I WAS CERTAIN THERE WAS NO WAY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT COULD PROVIDE A SUM OF THIS KIND FOR SUPPORT OF MUZOREWA, EVEN, AS THE BISHOP SUGGESTED, THROUGH THIRD PARTIES. I UNDERSTOOD THE DELICACY OF CURTIS' POSITION IN TRANSMITTING A NEGATIVE MESSAGE OF THIS KIND AND LEFT TO HIM WHETHER HE SIMPLY PASSED IT OFF BY SAYING HE HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED ABOUT IT OR EXPLAINED

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MORE DIRECTLY TO THE BISHOP THAT WE WOULD BE UNABLE TO PROVIDE MONEY TO HIM OR ANY OF THE OTHER LEADERS. HE COULD EXPLAIN THAT WE SIMPLY COULD NOT GET INVOLVED IN THIS KIND OF THING WHICH COULD NOT HELP BUT AFFECT OUR LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP WITH ANY OF THE LEADERS WHETHER SUCCESSFUL OR NOT.

3. CURTIS STARTED OFF BY SAYING THAT HE HAD YET TO FIND AN AFRICAN WHO SUPPORTED THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT IN HIS TALKS OUTSIDE OF SALISBURY. HE HOPED TO BE ABLE TO ENGAGE THE BISHOP IN FRANK CONVERSATION IN WHICH HE COULD EXPLAIN HIS CONCERN OVER THE SITUATION.

4. CURTIS SAID HE HAD DELIVERED THE MESSAGE FROM HIGHEST U.S. OFFICIALS SAYING THAT THE BISHOP WAS HIGHLY REGARDED BY THEM AND THAT THEY HOPED HE COULD SEE HIS WAY TO SUPPORTING AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING. HE TOLD THE BISHOP THAT PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES WERE CONFUSED AND PUZZLED BY THE SITUATION HERE. THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF SUPPORT FOR THE POSITION OF THOSE OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY WHO, IT WAS FELT, HAD A RIGHT TO A VOICE AND PARTICIPATION IN THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION.

5. FINALLY, CURTIS SAID HE WAS DISTURBED BY WHAT HE HAD LEARNED OF THE BISHOP'S LEADERSHIP. HE WAS ANTAGONIZING MANY OF HIS MOST ABLE FOLLOWERS AND HAD GATHERED AROUND HIMSELF SOME OF THE LESS ARTICULATE AND INTELLIGENT FOLLOWERS (I.E. CHIKEREMA).

6. I AM TRYING TO KEEP CONTACT AS DISCREET AS POSSIBLE. HE PLANS TO REMAIN HERE FOR ANOTHER TEN DAYS.
EDMONDSON

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NNN

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